

Mexican Folklore Suite

II. THE MERMAID OF THE VOLCANO

Folk story from the State of Mexico

One evening, Don Evaristo was telling Emily and me some new stories from different parts of Mexico about fabulous animals. Doña Almada suddenly suggested: "Evaristo, tell our friends that beautiful but sad story about the mermaid."

"Which one?" He wondered.

"You know. The one we heard when we went to see the 'Nevado de Toluca'." She explained.

Tale written by Homero Adame.

"Ah, yes! A beautiful, but very sad story!" He said, and was very quiet for a long minute.

"Near Toluca, in the State of Mexico, there is a beautiful volcano called 'The 'Nevado de Toluca', because it always has snow on top," he began. "At the top, in the crater, there is a lake. People say that a mermaid now lives there. She was once a quite normal young girl, but one day, she walked up the volcano with her father, who wanted to get some snow. While he was collecting the snow, the girl suddenly decided to go for a swim in the lake. Suddenly, as she was washing her hair, she felt something pulling her down, down, down, deep into the impenetrable black waters of the icy cold lake. Shortly after, her worried father started to look for her, but of course, he could not find his beloved daughter anywhere. He became more and more anxious. Then, all at once, he heard his daughter's sweet, clear voice, saying: 'Dearest Daddy, please don't look for me any more. I am safe, but I am under a spell, and it is my destiny to stay here in the lake, forever. I can never leave the lake again, because my body is now half human and half fish. I am a mermaid. A mermaid who lives at the top of a mountain...'. The man searched and searched until he fainted from exhaustion, not wanting to believe his ears. But he never, ever saw his child again."

"Oh no, that's very sad!" Emily exclaimed.

"Don Evaristo, why did she turn into a mermaid?" I asked.

"Hmmm. That's a good question." He said. "Nobody can really tell why, but I assume the spirit of the lake decided to take her at once, because she was a beautiful, fresh young girl, with a pure soul, who would bring him great joy..."

"So the father never saw her again. But has anyone else ever seen her?" I asked.

"Apparently they have." He said. "The story became a legend when, quite frequently, people began to swear they had seen a mermaid, at the top of the volcano..."

Folk story found in Homer Adame's blog at:

<https://adameleyendas.wordpress.com/2010/11/06/myths-and-legends-from-the-state-of-mexico-the-mermaid-of-the-volcano/>

Written by Homero Adame and taken from the English textbook *Activate!* 2.

By Carol Lethaby, Homero Adame and Pat Grounds. Ediciones Castillo, S.A. de C.V. Monterrey, Mexico. 2003. P. 100.

Notes about music and performance:

Percussion: Realizing that water-gourds are somewhat unique and rare, it is understood that other instruments/drums may need to be substituted. If water-gourds are obtainable, they would be preferable, and the extra effort would be appreciated by the composer. The pitches of whichever instruments are selected should be low, medium, and high, and the lowest note should be one of much resonance. Furthermore, if water-gourds are used, and techniques other than what I have indicated can be substituted and used effectively, then ad-lib. is highly recommended.

Trumpet: The "whispa" mute is indicated to reflect any mute that is a Shh mute, or practice mute - whichever achieves the softest and most in-tune result. Individual preference is expected. Extra vibrato on occasion is suggested, to hint at mariachi style.

Cello: There is indication for the D string pizz. to be tuned using the "chin"!!! This was witnessed just once by the composer, and therefore assumed as a possibility. Subsequent alterations deemed necessary by the performer are perfectly acceptable, but only if done while laughing at the composer for his crazy expectations of the player...

There is also an indication for a triple stop (on two occasions), where the B-natural is to be just touched upon while sustaining two lower strings. This is meant to sound imperfect, almost as if a triple stop is being attempted, but can't be sustained. Exact replication of what is notated is not expected, but can almost be ad-libbed instead.

Also - if the strummed pizzicati mean that extra time must be taken so as to execute, then so be it. Rubato playing is encouraged.

All: There is an indication at the end for someone to whistle (symbolizing a siren song of the mermaid). You can all fight it out and have auditions (only behind a screen!) so as to see who gets to perform this role. However, if no one can do it, it may be omitted.

Lastly: though the melodic material is completely original, care was taken to make it sound Mexican. To that effort, strains of a folk tune called *Me Abandonas* ("You Abandon Me") were borrowed, but adapted to my needs.

Jim Stephenson

II. The Mermaid of the Volcano

James M. Stephenson

Andante cantabile ♩ = 69

The musical score is for a piece titled "The Mermaid of the Volcano" by James M. Stephenson. It is marked "Andante cantabile" with a tempo of ♩ = 69. The score is in 3/4 time and features three parts: C tpt. (C Trumpet), Cello, and Water-gourds (3) (High, Middle, and Low). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-4) shows the C tpt. part with rests, the Cello part with a pizzicato (pizz.) instruction and a dynamic of *p*, and the Water-gourds part with a dynamic of *p* and triplet markings. The second system (measures 5-8) includes a "cup mute" instruction for the C tpt. part, a boxed letter "A" above measure 7, and a dynamic of *p*. The Cello part continues with a dynamic of *p*. The Water-gourds part has a dynamic of *p* and triplet markings. The third system (measures 9-12) shows the C tpt. part with a dynamic of *p* and a hairpin crescendo. The Cello part has a dynamic of *mf* and a hairpin crescendo. The Water-gourds part has a dynamic of *mf* and a hairpin crescendo. A large watermark "www.StephensonMusic.com" is overlaid diagonally across the score.

16

C tpt. *mf*

Vc. arco *p*

gourds *p*

21

C tpt. *p*

Vc. pizz. *p* *mf* arco *mf*

gourds *p* *mf*

B

26

C tpt. *fp* *mf*

Vc. *fp* *mf*

gourds *fp* *mf*

31

C tpt. *p*

Vc. arco *p* *pizz.* *p* ***achieved by using chin to depress D string*

gourds *p*

C

The Mermaid of the Volcano

4

D

36

C tpt.

Vc.

gourds

f *fp* *f*

3 3 3 4

41

C tpt.

Vc.

gourds

3 3 3 5

E

46

C tpt.

Vc.

gourds

p

3

F a tempo

whisper mute

52

C tpt.

Vc.

gourds

pp *pp* *pp*

pizz.

3

splash water
(if necessary, use
4th bowl for this)

57

C tpt.

Vc.

gourds

62

C tpt.

Vc.

gourds

rit.

G a tempo

arco

pp

67

C tpt.

Vc.

gourds

Whistle

ppp

**just barely touch B \flat randomly, so as to hint at G major, while clashing w/ trumpet

pp

***whoever is able to whistle should execute this part. (even if it's the trumpeter, who would need to edit (cut-off) their part accordingly).